

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 are pending in the present application. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present claims in view of the following remarks.

I. Formal Matters:

Restriction Requirement

The Office Action requires restriction between the following groups of claims:

Group I: Claims 1-15, 19-23 and 31 drawn to an absorbent structure;

Group II: Claims 16-18 drawn to an absorbent structure comprising fibers; and

Group III: Claims 24-30 drawn to a method of diagnosing a neurodegenerative disease.

Applicants elect, *with traverse*, Group I, Claims 1-15, 19-23 and 31 drawn to an absorbent structure, reserving the right to pursue Claims 16-18 and 24-30 in a continuation patent application, if necessary. Additionally, it is presumed that Claim 32 is also included in Group I and will be examined with Group I as Claims 31 and 32 are directed to a disposable garment as the absorbent structure.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the above restriction requirement given that the above groups of claims are so interrelated that prosecution of the claims would not unduly burden the Examiner.

III. Thus, Applicants submit that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP § 803 in which it is stated that "if the search and examination of the entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct and independent inventions."

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the restriction requirement and examination of claims 1-32 as a single group.

II. Conclusion:

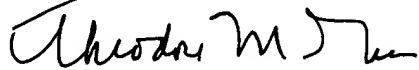
For at least the reasons given above, Applicants submit that a search for the subject' matter of claims 1-32 could be made without serious burden to the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the restriction/election requirement be withdrawn.

The foregoing is submitted as a full and complete Response to the Restriction Requirement mailed August 14, 2001, and early and favorable consideration of the claims is requested.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary in order to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

No additional fees are believed due; however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 11-0855.

Respectfully submitted,



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